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A radio talk by W. R. M. Wharton, chief of the eastern district, Federal Food and Drug Administration, delivered Monday mornings at 10 a.m., Eastern Standard Time, through Station WJZ, New York, and associated National Broadcasting Company station.

Good morning, my radio friends, I would like this morning to explain to the new members of my radio audience and emphasize to those of you who have been listening to me for these many months the purpose I have in mind in my long continued effort to teach the home makers how to read labels.

The Food and Drug Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture is charged with the enforcement of the Federal food and drugs act, which was designed specifically to protect the health of the consuming public, and to prevent you from being imposed upon and defrauded by being sold fraudulently adulterated and misbranded foods and drugs. The food and drugs act does not deny the channels of commerce to wholesome products, even though they may be wholly imitation, inferior in quality, and worth much less than the genuine products which they imitate --- but it does require all such products and, indeed, all foods and drugs to be truthfully labeled. Now it has been the constant effort of your government officials for 25 years to bring about truthful labeling of foods and drugs. And so, my friends, don't you see that unless you know what labels mean, unless you employ a high degree of intelligence in making your purchases, unless you discriminate in your buying, you cannot secure the fullest measure of benefit from the food and drugs act and the efforts of your government in enforcing it? The Food and Drug Administration, as the representative of the people, always has in mind the protection of your rights and your interests. My purpose in this radio series is to furnish you information which will not only enable you to protect yourselves, but will also help you to exercise your influence. Let me add that your collective influence is one of the mightiest forces in this country today. I want you to use that influence to the end that labels on food and drug products will give even more completely informing facts than they do at present. More informative labeling is bound to result if you exercise intelligence and discrimination in making your purchases. Insist upon getting exactly what you wish to buy--- exercise your right to know the whole truth --- knowing how to read labels will enable you to do all of these things. As customers, you have inherent rights, you have the absolute and indisputable right to know what the product is that you pay your money for. If you insist upon securing and holding this right, manufacturers, jobbers and retailers can do nothing less than to furnish you with a full and complete means of informing yourselves as to the quality, character, condition and nature of the products

you buy. I am your Government representative. It is my business to aid you and to work in your interest! This is the reason I am endeavoring so strenuously to teach you how to read labels. My purpose is to be of constructive aid to each one of you. My objective is to furnish you with the means whereby you may take the matter of selecting your foods and drugs in your own hands instead of leaving it to the tradesmen who often make the decisions for you. My object is to create such a wide-spread consumer insistence in this matter that no manufacturer nor tradesman will dare to deceive you, either by misleading statements or omissions. My objective is to enlist your aid, the aid of hundreds of thousands of you, to the end that benefits may accrue to you individually and collectively. And these benefits will mean efficiency in your household, economy in your purchases and the satisfaction of knowing that you are playing your proper part in your house-keeping business, and moreover, they will give you a consciousness that your influence is working for the common welfare.

I am sure that you will all be interested in the progress of the read-the-label campaign. The interest in it has been tremendous. Thousands of home makers have written for my mimeographed read-the-label sheets for study. Hundreds of women's clubs are now discussing this topic in their meetings. Scores of home economics departments in the colleges and high schools of the nation are teaching the idea to the growing young men and women; newspapers, magazines and trade publications have commented favorably, and I have received many thousands of letters of appreciation from the radio audience. Let me show you what a few of these serious minded home makers, tradesmen, food and drug manufacturers, publishers, physicians and the like, think of this work by reading you quotations from their letters.

A Washington, D. C. housewife says: "You certainly deserve a universal note of thanks and deep appreciation from the entire force of home makers and family food providers. Your talks to my mind are the most truly vital of any that come to us over the radio". A club woman of New York says: "I am the legislative chairman of a club of 200 women and would like very much to have a copy of your talks on how to read labels to present to the club". A teacher of a high school in Massachusetts says: "I am writing in behalf of my science class. We obtained a radio and listen to your talks every week. We find them extremely interesting as we are taking up the study of adulteration of foods". A merchant of Missouri says: "I believe every merchant as well as every consumer should have this information". A hotel steward's association writes: "We have been very much interested in your various radio talks and have published a number of them in our monthly publication". A prominent Georgia woman says: "In your talks each week you are rendering a unique and valuable service to the public". A Massachusetts home maker writes: "Your effort is really praiseworthy". A North Carolina housewife says: "I think the information we have already gotten and will get from your talks is something we as housewives have been needing for a long time". A prominent financier says: "It is very important that we should know what is contained in the merchandise that we buy and I believe that your talks on this subject will greatly enlighten the buying public. Wishing you much success and hoping thousands

of others will avail themselves of the opportunity of securing a permanent record of your talks". A Home Economics Demonstration Agent of Missouri says: "I enjoyed your radio talks and think that you have done a wonderful piece of work in informing the public what has been done". A physician says: "Your talks over the radio have interested me both as a physician and a householder". Another physician from Massachusetts says: "Your talk this morning over the radio was one of the best and most truthful that I have ever heard over the radio on medical subjects". Another financier of Pennsylvania says: "I was very much delighted to receive your pamphlets and you certainly are giving the world information that we all need very badly. Your article on vitamins is one of the best I ever read and I think I have had nearly everything that is written on the subject".

If I had the time, I could read you thousands of such expressions, all from people who wish to become discriminating, careful and economical buyers, and who are seriously learning how to read labels.

I have already told the radio audience how to read labels on 34 different classes of products and I shall continue well into the next year discussing a new subject each week. Copies of all of these are available without charge to all who write.

I have some interesting news for you today. The Food and Drug Administration is making great progress in standardizing canned fruits and vegetables. Perhaps you do not know what this means---so let me tell you that the 71st United Congress passed, and the President on July 8, 1930, approved, an amendment, commonly known as the Mapes Bill or the Cannery Bill, to the Federal food and drugs act. This enactment is intended to promote honesty and fair dealing in the interest of the consumer. The amendment authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to determine, establish and promulgate reasonable standards of quality, condition and / or fill of container for each class of canned foods except canned milk and those meat products of cattle, sheep, swine or goats which are subject to the Federal meat inspection act. This does not mean standards are authorized for grades, varieties, or species of a generic product, but only for generic products themselves. The amendment further provides authority for the Secretary of Agriculture to prescribe and promulgate a form of statement which must appear in a plain and conspicuous manner on each package or label of canned foods which falls below the standards promulgated, which statement shall indicate that such canned food falls below such standards. Now, my friends, enactment of this amendment to the food and drugs act is an epoch-making event in your interest. It is an important step forward in the interest of informative labeling. It signifies that the consumer will be furnished on the label a means of determining whether any particular item of canned food is above or below an established standard of excellence. I told you that this amendment is known as the Cannery Bill. This is because the law was passed at the behest and urgency of the American canners themselves. The American canning industry is not only solidly supporting the enforcement of the Federal food and drugs act, but desires further to see in effect legal requirements for informative branding of a still more effective kind.

Great progress has been made in the formation of the standards for the various food products. Standards for several canned products will be promulgated shortly, and when next season's pack of canned foods comes on the market, you will find on labels of products not meeting the established standards a statement indicating that such products are below the United States standard. The legend to be used to indicate the fact has not been decided upon, but the expression "Below United States Standard" will likely form a part of it. Isn't this good news? Isn't it good news that you are to be supplied a method of determining whether canned foods are of standard quality or not? Now what does it actually mean to you? It means if any lot of canned goods is not properly prepared or does not meet the standards established for quality, then such products must be marked to show that they are below the United States Standard. Heretofore, the label reader has not had any label means of determining whether any particular canned food is of standard quality or substandard, tender or tough, naturally flavored or off in flavor, properly filled or improperly filled, naturally colored, or off in color, and the like. The official standards will require normal color, acceptable degree of tenderness, normal flavor, etc., and any products not meeting any of these conditions will be required to be labeled with a statement showing them to be below the United States Standard. This will not require manufacturers to make label statements of the various degrees of quality, nor will it even require labels to state that the products contained are of standard quality when such is the case, but it will require labels on substandard products to plainly designate them as below United States Standard. When products are labeled to show that they are below the United States Standard, this will not mean that they are unfit for food. It will mean that they are inferior to standard products and, therefore, should sell at a cheaper price. Isn't this a splendid piece of news for you, Mr. and Mrs. Label Reader? You may begin to look for the declaration on the products covered after next season's pack of canned goods comes on the market. If you find a statement to the effect that the product is sub-standard, you will know that it is below the established standard. If you do not find such a statement, you will know that the product meets the standard. It is possible that manufacturers themselves will elect to make affirmative and positive statements of relative quality on products which are superior to the standard. I can visualize developments from this beginning which will present to the consumers a fuller opportunity to become increasingly more discriminating in making their purchases. This amendment to the law will not cause any let-up in the enforcement of the food and drugs act. Unfit products will continue to be barred from commerce and denied the right to be used.

Now, my friends, I want you all to become discriminating buyers. I am urging you to learn to read labels. In order to learn to read labels you should study my radio talks. I will be glad to send copies of all my radio talks already delivered and those to follow to all who write. Address your letters to W. R. M. Wharton, United States Department of Agriculture, 201 Varick Street, New York City.

